

## A NEW SPECIES OF SPERCHEUS FROM TEXAS (COLEOPTERA: HYDROPHILIDAE)

By PAUL J. SPANGLER<sup>1</sup>

When unidentified hydrophilid beetles were being sorted in the U. S. National Museum, a specimen was found that superficially appeared to be an aberrant *Sperchopsis tessellatus* (Ziegler). However, a study of this specimen showed it to be very different from any of our North American genera and that it was a new species belonging to the genus *Spercheus* Kugelann (1798, p. 241). At present there are sixteen species in this genus. Only one of these, *Spercheus fimbriicollis* Bruch, from Argentina, has been described from the Western Hemisphere. *Spercheus fimbriicollis* may be distinguished readily from *texanus* sp. nov. by the bituberculate vertex of the head and by the very strong emarginations of the lateral margins of the pronotum.

The genus *Spercheus* belongs to the subfamily Spercheinae which is not included in our present keys to North American water beetles. In Leech's (1956, p. 337) key to adult hydrophilid genera, this subfamily runs to couplet 11, which separates the subfamily Berosinae from the Hydrobiinae. The following couplets will separate the three subfamilies that run to couplet 11.

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|----|---|---------------------------|
| 1. | Head not strongly deflexed; antennae 6- or 9-segmented; middle and hind tibiae without natatory fringes -----             | 2                         |
|    | Head markedly deflexed; antennae 7-segmented; middle and hind tibiae with natatory fringes -----                          |                           |
|    | -----BEROSINAE  |                           |
| 2. | Antennae 6-segmented; scutellum a long triangle; anterior margin of clypeus strongly reflexed (SPERCHEINAE) -----         | SPERCHEUS TEXANUS sp. nov |
|    | Antennae 9-segmented; scutellum not or not much longer than its basal width; anterior margin of clypeus not reflexed----- | HYDROBIINAE               |

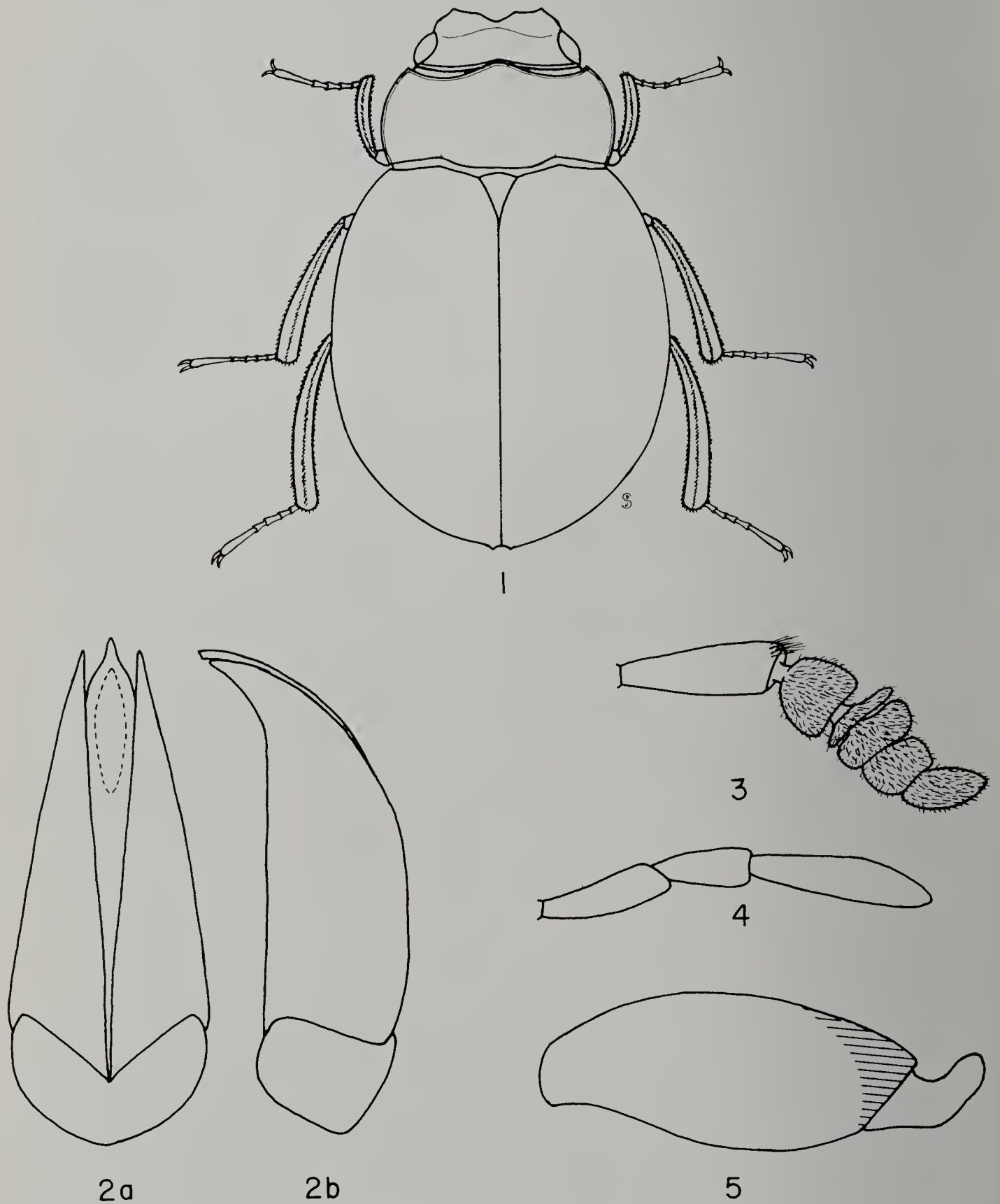
### *Spercheus texanus* NEW SPECIES

*Color:* Dorsal surface of head, pronotum, and elytra castaneous. Elytra with a few irregularly shaped, fuscous maculae on disc and along sutural margin; maculae narrowly confluent, thus appearing almost vittiform along sutural margin. Ventral surface castaneous.

*Male:* Body form strongly convex and in general facies resembling *Sperchopsis tessellatus* (Ziegler). Dorsal surface of head rugulose; epicranial suture present but feebly indicated. Clypeus strongly reflexed marginally and with broad V-shaped emargination anteriorly. Labrum partially hidden by clypeus; mentum three times as wide as long and strongly rugose. Submentum arising at an 80°—90° angle from gula. Maxillary palpi slightly longer than antennae, ultimate segment stouter and as long as two preceding segments combined. Antenna 6 segmented; first segment long, stout, and glabrous except for a few apical setae; second hemispherical, pubescent, and more closely attached to third; remaining segments larger and pubescent, ultimate segment subquadrate. Pronotum finely margined anteriorly; twice as wide as long, strongly arcuate laterally and with coarse, dense punctures. Inflexed margin of pronotum distinctly carinate longitudinally. Prosternum not modified medially but with

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*Spercheus texanus*; FIG. 1, holotype male; FIG. 2, aedeagus: a. ventral view, b. lateral view; FIG. 3, antenna; FIG. 4, maxillary palpus; FIG. 5, hind femur illustrating extent of basal pubescent area.

a small tuft of setae anterior to antero-lateral angles of procoxae. Scutellum one and one-half times as long as broad. Metasternum with a minute longitudinal carina. Elytra densely, coarsely punctate, each elytron with indications of 10-11 feeble costae that are more evident apically. Costae indicated by short, sparse, golden setae. Metasternum between mesocoxae with small, short, longitudinal carina behind which is a small, transverse, glabrous area. Abdominal segments unmodified except fifth which has lateral margins deflexed and median apical margin reflexed. Ventral surface of body pubescent except inflexed portions of pronotum and epipleura. Coxae and trochanters pubescent. Legs glabrous except for pubescence on small basal area of femora. Ventral side of femora coarsely, densely punctate, appearing rugose. Femoral punctures with short, stiff, golden setae. Tibiae apparently without spurs; each with 6 rows of coarse, stiff setae giving tibiae a hexagonal appearance. Basal tarsal segment short, subequal to second and fourth; third slightly longer. Fifth segment stouter and longer than preceding four segments combined. Length 6.5 mm., greatest body width 4.5 mm.

Type: Holotype male, U. S. National Museum type No. 65149, from: Texas, Corpus Christi (6 mi. s.), August 25, 1935, Charles E. Burt.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- KUGELANN, J. C., 1798. *In: Illiger's Verz. Kaf. Preussens*, xlii + 510 pp.
- LEECH, H. B., 1956. *In: Aquatic insects of California with keys to North American genera and California species*, ix + 508 pp.

## BIOLOGY AND LIFE HISTORY OF THE LIGUSTRUM WEEVIL (CURCULIONIDAE)

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The Ligustrum Weevil (*Ochyromera ligustri* Warner) was first found in Wake County, North Carolina on June 8, 1959. Attention was directed to a large ligustrum tree (*Ligustrum japonicum* Thumb.) about twenty-five feet high and with a spread of about twenty-five feet diameter. Most of the leaves were perforated by feeding of the adult beetles. Leaves of lilac nearby were also being eaten. Adult beetles were observed feeding on the leaf tissues and were easily collected if the foliage was not unduly disturbed. However, many beetles would fall to the ground just as soon as a twig was touched or the leaves only slightly jarred. This feigning death and dropping habit has been noted in some other Curculionidae.

#### LIFE HISTORY NOTES

Data on life history have been collected during the past three years (1959-61) in the Wake County, North Carolina locality. Although data on life history are not as yet complete the following notes seem worth recording. The dates included in the following notes would probably be applicable only for the latitude of Wake County.

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